

Application No. 10/024,633  
Reply to Office Action dated August 27, 2003

### REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application in view of the above amendments and following remarks is respectfully requested. Claims 24-43 are pending. Claims 1 and 26 have been amended.

Claim 26 stands objected to with regard to the word "styreneacrylic". As suggested by the Examiner, Applicants have now amended this term by making it two words.

Claims 24-43 stand rejected for the reasons of record, as repeated on pages 2-6 of the Office Action, to which Applicants have previously responded. However, as set forth starting at the bottom of page 6 through page 7, the Examiner under the heading "Response to Arguments" has identified specific issues to which this Amendment is directed.

(1) The "negative proviso" of claim 24 recites that the coating layer comprises "substantially no" calcium carbonate filler and "substantially no" titanium dioxide pigment. The Examiner notes that Malhotra (U.S. Patent No. 5,919,552) discloses a coating composition comprising these elements at concentrations as low as 0.5 parts by weight. However, such an amount is excluded by the negative proviso of claim 24 – that is, the term "substantially no" is not satisfied when the excluded element is present at a level of 0.5 parts by weight.

(2) To further clarify point (1) above, and to address the Examiner's comments concerning "fouling", Applicants have amended claim 24 to recite that the coating layer comprises substantially no calcium carbonate filler and substantially no titanium dioxide pigment, such that the weatherproof sheet does not foul upon subsequent photocopying or laser printing of the same. Support for this amendment may be found in the specification at, for example, page 7, 8-12. At the top of page 7 of the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner stated that Applicants had not recited in the claims the feature relied upon in the prior argument; namely, that the coated sheets of this invention avoid the fouling problems associated with prior art sheets. The above amendment obviates this ground of rejection.

(3) Lastly, the Examiner relies upon Nitta (U.S. Patent No. 6,028,028) for teaching "impregnatively covering" a cellulosic substrate. This feature, however, is not taught or suggested by Nitta (at least as the term "impregnatively covering" is used in the context of this invention). Rather, Nitta is directed to gluing a relatively stiff film, such as a polypropylene

weatherproof  
sheet  
= Cellulose  
substrate  
pg. 10, 12  
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film, to one side of a fabric, and in no instance does Nitta teach or suggest impregnantly coating one side of a cellulosic substrate with a weatherproofing coating layer. To further clarify this distinction, Applicants have amended claim 24 to recite a durable weatherproofing coating layer impregnantly covering at least one of the two sides of the substrate, wherein the coating layer penetrates the surface of the at least one of the two sides of the substrate. Support for this amendment may be found throughout the specification, such as page 10, lines 2-3.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 24-43 are patentable over Malhotra and Nitta, taken either alone or in combination.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that claims 24-43 are in condition for allowance. A good faith effort has been made to place this application in condition for allowance. However, should any further issue require attention prior to allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at (206) 622-4900 to resolve the same.

Respectfully submitted,

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